"Expanding the Use of the
Sweepless Raised Footrope Trawl
In the Whiting Fishery"

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Video Abstract

An edited video was produced on April 2003 with a running time of approximately 12 minutes. This movie is to show fishermen the advantages of a sweepless raised footrope trawl over a standard raised footrope trawl. This video starts with a historical account of the importance of the whiting fishery for Massachusetts small fishing vessels and the reasons why the fishery was closed. Footage collected from both sea-sampling trips and the flume tank, from the Marine Institute at Memorial University in Newfoundland, show how this net design became management's new tool which helped re-establish a fishery. The video then discusses the three advantages of a sweepless raised footrope trawl over a standard raised footrope trawl. The sweepless raised footrope trawl is considered an improved design because it is less likely to become entangled in abandoned fishing gear, it is easier to understand and enforce, and it has less bottom contact than a standard raised footrope trawl. After the persuasive argument was presented to the viewer, the video then explained how to change a standard net to a sweepless version. During a trip with the help of a fisherman, the sweep was cut away from the drop chains, measurements were taken after a completed tow, and further adjustments were made to a net while staying within the federal regulations. The regulations that are required by the small mesh fishery exemptions were presented over flume tank footage. The source for the regulations surrounding small mesh fishery exemptions was also presented. The end of the video shows the potential of the improved to design in other fisheries. The funding for this project was provided by a grant from Unallied Science, (grant number: NA16FL2261). This video is catalogued in the conservation engineering program's video library as 03MADMF845.